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Where Does the Truth Lie?

On the same day this week that David Lawrence was arguing that the United States is the strongest military power in the world today, Roscoe Drummond was questioning whether our defense system was not woefully inadequate for fighting the kind of war most likely to occur. That same day the news columns were reporting that Maj. Gen. J. H. Walsh, airforce intelligence chief, had expressed in a senate hearing the opinion that Soviet missile strength will increase faster than our own. In this view he took sharp exception to an opinion voiced earlier by Allen W. Dulles, chief of the central intelligence agency.

The question these differences of opinion raise is not merely how good our defense measures are but how effective our intelligence services are. Gen. Walsh is not a calamity howler. He is a hard-bitten military officer whose special job is to determine, if possible, what a potential enemy is doing and what we should do to counter him. Allen Dulles is no dreamer. He is just as tough-minded as Walsh. Dulles has not been reluctant in the past to give the country bad news when it has come along. And as head of CIA, he is presumed to have all the information available on what Rus-

sa and other countries are doing. Yet he and Walsh are in serious disagreement.

David Lawrence bases his opinions on what he can learn in Washington. He is inclined to be optimistic about our defense measures. Roscoe Drummond, with access to the same source of information that Lawrence taps, believes with Adm. Arleigh A. Burke, chief of naval operations, that we are overemphasizing nuclear weapons and are not preparing to meet the threat of limited war. Both men believe that if war comes it will not be a nuclear conflict because of the fearful reprisal that an attacked nation could visit on the attacker. Have our intelligence services paid sufficient heed to this viewpoint? It is difficult to say, although not only Adm. Burke but such other military leaders as Gen. Matthew Ridgway and Gen. Maxwell Taylor have stressed this point.

Only President Eisenhower is in position to reconcile the varying statements of the last several weeks on this general score. We doubt that the thinking public will be satisfied until it hears from him directly and at some length on this whole matter. And it is to hear from him on a telecast Sunday.

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